Re-Imagining the Building Blocks of Democracy – Policy Recommendations

Now in its third year, this is a four-year DCF project that emanated from ADF 2021, encompassing the global north and the global south, and aims to design practical policy recommendations (Reform Package) and to advocate for their approval and implementation by decision makers. Here is a summary of the main policy recommendations:

The current (third year) state of affairs regarding the Reform Package

1. *The power of the people: Citizen-led Parliamentary Committees.*
   a. This proposal is the result of work done in Sydney in partnership with the newDemocracy Foundation and suggests that citizens' panels should advise parliamentary committees when they discuss draft legislation. If the parliamentary committee does not accept the citizens' recommendations, then it must explain to the public the reasons for the rejection.
   b. Following a pre-pilot at ADF 2023, the concept will be further tested and expanded at ADF 2024, through the interaction of a Caucus of Parliamentarians with a group of citizens (chosen by sortition) as well as with a group of adolescents that will be participating in the proceedings through the Teens ADF pilot program that is run by DCF and is now in its 3rd and final pilot phase. All three groups will have "studied" one theme that is in common with ADF's content, and the results of their exchange will be integrated into the final reform package, to finesse it and ready it for advocacy.

2. *The Power of Voting: Compulsory voting and youth.*
   a. The Kofi Annan Foundation is developing this proposition with emphasis on getting the younger generations to the voting booths. Currently KAF's work involves a survey of youth, done in cooperation with DCF, regarding their attitude on compulsory voting, the convening of a representative group at ADF 2024 to discuss the findings from the survey, thus further advancing the preparation for advocacy.
   b. The next step would be to carry-out a pilot in early 2025, which would be conducted at the local government level (e.g. small municipality), thus finessing the proposal for inclusion in the reform package and readying it for advocacy.

3. *The power of information: labelling and veracity*
   a. The issue of labelling was first dealt with in partnership with the Bertelsmann Foundation, but the development of the concepts has now been undertaken by the Foundation for Innovation and Development (in Colombia) to better reflect the global scale of the project.
   b. Building on the work done in the first year by Bertelsmann and DCF, FID is currently engaged in work along two axes:
      i. Building a veracity index to be applied to all print and digital news companies
      ii. Designing the conditions that would enable citizens –and not only organizations and institutions—to create internationally accepted rules for labeling disinformation and misinformation.

4. *The power of the executive vs. legislature: Obtaining a citizens' acceptable balance*
   a. This proposal originated in Seoul, with the Taejae Future Consensus Institute, and supports setting up a "Fourth Branch of Government", composed of citizens chosen by sortition, for a four-year period, and advised by experts who change every two

years. This body would have the remit to resolve issues when the executive and the legislators are at loggerhead—with no solution in sight.

b. The work has progressed through discussions in London, presentations at the Council of Europe and is now at the stage where a book detailing the issue is nearing completion. It will be presented at ADF 2024 and the next steps for advocacy will be decided.

5. *The Power of the parties: party elections and digitalization*

a. The Konrad Adenauer Stiftung has determined that the critical question is "how can political parties adapt to become more representative and participatory" and has reached two policy recommendations: (i) political parties should elect their leaders at all levels through direct elections open to all members, and (ii) political parties should engage in AI-enhanced dialogue on all important issues, encouraging their members to participate.

b. These proposals put in the context of the discussions over the last two years are being gathered in a concise paper (parsimony) to be reviewed by a representative set of practitioners (feasibility), for implementation to be discussed at ADF 2024

6. *The Power of business: the role of the business community in safeguarding democracy*

a. This issue, examined in partnership with McKinsey, questions the business ethos of short-termism that has prevailed since the 1990s as presenting a danger to democracy. Recommendations have been stress-tested in discussions with experts.

b. The project has matured to the stage that a set of values reflecting the demands of our times has been prepared and a number of specific policy recommendations (actually seven) aiming to uncouple the business community from the ethos of short-termism have been designed. Meetings with academicians, politicians, institutions, and citizens are being programmed and the results will be presented at ADF 2024 in preparation for the start of the advocacy period.

7. *The power of AI and Ethics: how to best obtain the optimum use of technology without compromising the democratic ethos.*

a. This is work in progress, following a roundtable with academicians, institutions and the E.U.

b. The main policy recommendations rest on the critical tenet that, when it comes to issues of privacy and data-protection, human rights must be respected. So, in order to foster innovation and to make data use legitimate in accordance with the right to privacy and data protection, one way would be the "purpose-driven data use" approach.

c. A complementary recommendation is for an International Data-Based Systems Agency (IDA) to be established at the UN, as a platform for technical cooperation in the field of digital transformation and DS fostering human rights, safety, security, and peaceful uses of DS as well as a global supervisory and monitoring institution and regulatory authority in the area of digital transformation and DS.

d. These issues will be further discussed during the period leading to ADF 2024, aiming to present at the conference a more complete - as well as realistic - framework that will also consider the Pacing Problem and the Collingridge Dilemma.